

**REMARKS**

The Examiner objected to the drawing. As noted above, proposed drawing corrections are enclosed herewith.

The Examiner objected to the specification due to the informalities listed in paragraph 6 of the Office Action. Amendments have been made to the specification correcting the noted informalities.

The Examiner objected to claim 2 due to the informalities noted in paragraph 8 of the Office Action. The Examiner also objected to claims 8-11 due to the informalities noted in paragraph 9 of the Office Action. Amendments have been made to claims 2 and 8-11 correcting the noted informalities.

The examiner rejected claims 8-11 under 35 USC § 112 due to insufficient antecedent basis, as set forth in paragraphs 10-12 of the Office Action. Applicant submits that the amendments to claims 8-11 making these claims depend from claim 2 overcomes this rejection.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 8, 9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 4,245,309 to Kiefer in view of USPN 3,819,906 to Gould, Jr. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Both the Kiefer patent and the Gould, Jr. patent relate to microprocessor/microcontroller based control apparatus for appliances in which the entire functioning is controlled through firmware/software. Neither of the patents disclose any form of modifiable hardware.

The novelty of the applicant's invention, on the other hand, lies in its provision of configurable hardware over and above its use of firmware/software to provide a degree of flexibility that is beyond that achievable through software alone. Software is ultimately limited by the capabilities of the hardware on which it operates, and the software itself is incapable of overcoming such limitations. For instance, if an additional analog input is desired and such a

capability is not available in the hardware, it is impossible for the software to provide a solution to the problem.

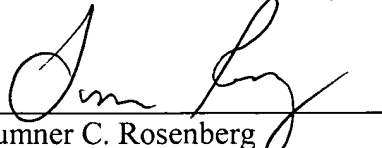
The present invention addresses this problem by providing a hardware platform that is capable of being reconfigured to provide such functionality when desired. This capability is in addition to the normal software of the type recited in the prior art patents. For this reason, the term "configurable" has been used in its broadest sense to cover both the hardware and software aspects and not be limited to one type.

Based on the above remarks, applicant believes that claims 1-6, 8, 9 and 12 are allowable.

The examiner also rejected claims 7, 10 and 11 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable based on Kiefer in view of other cited patents. Since claims 7, 10 and 11 are dependent on claim 1, these claims should also be allowable based on the remarks above.

Claims 1-12 remain in the application for consideration. Reexamination of all claims is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes discussion of any issue would facilitate examination, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,  
NEEDLE & ROSENBERG, P.C.

  
Sumner C. Rosenberg  
Reg. No. 28,753